

Ergonomics

Light It Right!

Too little light, too much light or light in the wrong places — these are some of the ways poor lighting can create workplace hazards.

On the brighter side, light of the correct intensity and arrangement will help you work safely.

Moderately bright light is generally the most comfortable. You should be able to see the work easily without glare. The light you need depends on the type of work you are doing. If you are carrying out inspections or detailed work, you will need more light. If you are working with larger pieces or doing assembly work, you won't need as much illumination.

This checklist should shed some light on workplace illumination:

- Can you see comfortably? Can you work without straining or tiring your eyes?
- Is the work zone free of glare or overly bright light?
- Is the lighting contrast adequate so you can make out different objects?
- Is the overall lighting of the area fairly even?
- Do you have direct control over the task lighting at your work station?



- Is the lighting appropriate for workers of all ages? As persons get older, they need more light to see.
- Is there natural daylight in addition to artificial light? Can you control the natural light to prevent glare as the day goes on?
- Are work surface materials appropriate for the kind of work being done? If a surface is too glossy, it will reflect the light causing a glare.
- How about the color of work surfaces and walls? The color of the surface should contrast with the material being worked on so you can easily distinguish components from the background. If you need to distinguish colors for the work you are doing, the color of the surfaces around you should enable you to do so easily.
- If your job requires you to move from outdoors to indoors,

is there adequate transition lighting to allow your eyes to adjust to the change? For instance, if you drive a forklift into a warehouse from the outdoors, you may have trouble seeing if the entrance is too dark. It takes several seconds for your eyes to adjust to the change in light.

- Are stairwells and hallways painted light colors to improve visibility? Railings, exits and other features should be in a contrasting color so they can be easily distinguished.
- Is bright tape or paint used to mark steps, uneven walking surfaces and other hazards?
- Are fluorescent lights flickering or “strobing” in your work area? This problem could cause optical illusions and injury or misjudgment when using equipment machine.

Good lighting is an important part of a safe and healthy workplace. The right light can help prevent accidents and mistakes, and can improve comfort and productivity. Some of the items on this checklist are things you should discuss with your supervisor. Work together to make sure your work area works for you.

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